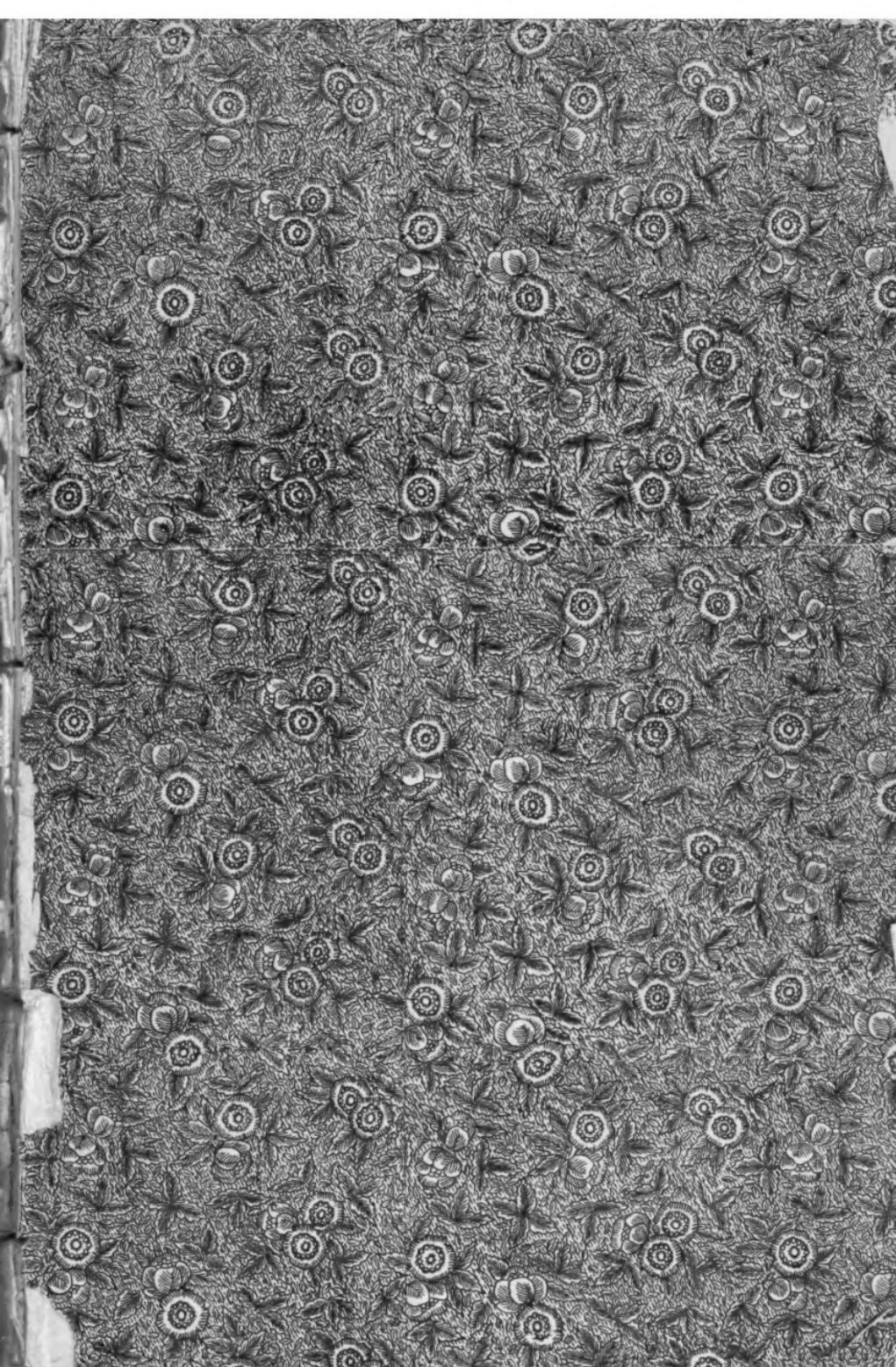




Tony Alexander's Practical Hunter's & Trapper's Guide

Tony Alexander





TONY ALEXANDER'S

PRACTICAL

HUNTERS & TRAPPERS

GUIDE

THE
SECRETS of the ART
TOLD BY AN
EXPERIENCED
TRAPPER

IN HIS OWN WAY
TO THE

HUNTERS & TRAPPERS
of AMERICA.

H. L. PENCE,
NEW YORK.

C. S. Hart

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P R E F A C E.

ALTHOUGH books on nearly every kind of sport and the nature and habits of game are numerous enough, very few of them are the work of men of actual practical experience who have made a business of hunting and trapping animals. These books, for the most part, have been prepared by gentlemen with little practice and abundant theory—theory which continues to prove fatal to the success of the earnest sportsman until he makes up his mind to rely on his own practically acquired knowledge, which generally serves him a thousand times better.

In hunting and trapping, as in every other practical business matter, it is only the man who has had continuous experience for a

long time and under many and various circumstances that can be trusted to advise.

Like many others, I at first studied the works of Newhouse and other theoretical sportsmen, but met with comparatively little success, until, by my own experience, I had acquired a thorough knowledge of a real sportsman's work. I do not consider the dressing of skins and dyeing of furs to be any proper part of this, although some writers give very elaborate instructions for these processes. The hunter is nothing if not a man who loves the woods and fields and fresh air for their own sake, and cherishes a hearty hatred for factories, dye pots and tan vats. What the true sportsman needs to know is the nature and habits of the animals which he hunts, the best bait to attract them, the surest traps to hold them, the most efficient gun for his use, the proper mode of caring for game when captured, and enough about the best means of stretch-

ing and drying skins to insure their reaching market in such shape as to command the best prices.

In compliance with the request of many friends, I will give to the public in the following pages the results of my experience for many years in these matters in the wildest parts of the South and West, and will ask especial attention to the most important matter of using the most effective traps. Writers are plenty who can give the name and cut of every trap and deadfall that has been used in the last century, but few have any real knowledge as to which of them will do the surest work. Undoubtedly S. Newhouse invented the best trap for all kinds of game that has been in use for many years; but it is far from perfect, and after experiencing many difficulties with it for more than eight years I have invented my "Body Trap." This I can demonstrate to be a great improvement on the Newhouse or any other

trap now in use, and perfectly adapted to capturing *with certainty* every variety of American game. The reader will find it carefully described in the chapter entitled "About Traps."

T. A.

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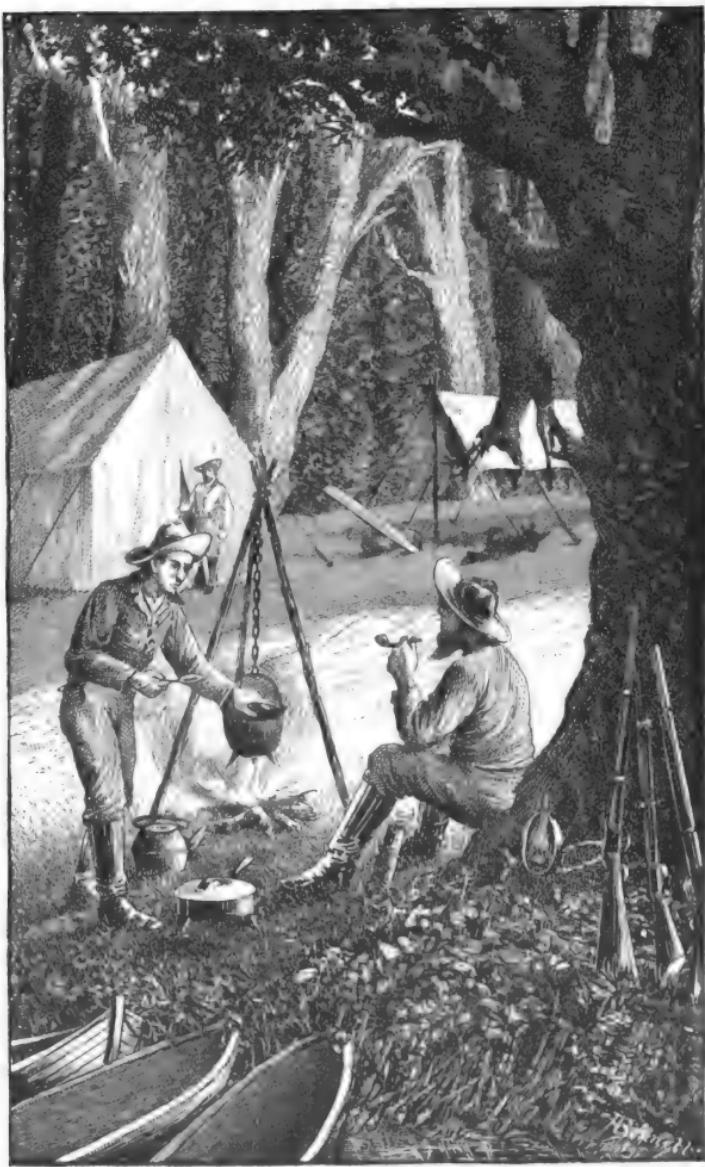
PRACTICAL HUNTER'S AND TRAPPER'S GUIDE.

THE HUNTER'S AND TRAPPER'S OUTFIT AND HOW TO USE IT.

I WILL now tell the secrets of my craft—hand over my belt in fact—to my fellow-hunters and trappers, many of whom have often worked hard to win it. Perhaps this is only fair to some of you who before now have hunted unsuccessfully over territory where I had been just one season ahead of you. But you shall not only know all that I have to tell, but I will put you in the way of having the best tools to work with—something that never makes a snap and will pay well on the old trapping grounds.

Three hunters form the most suitable party for trapping together; one to pelt and stretch skins and cook, the other two to trap and hunt.

The outfit for three consists of two dozen beaver, two dozen coon, two dozen mink, and two or four bear traps; two two-pound axes, one four-pound ax, one pelting and three skinning knives, one stew-pot, one frying-pan, one bake-oven, one tea-kettle, one set tin plates and cups, one coffee-mill, one dish-pan, one water and two dinner buckets, three dish rags, and one bar soap; one pair short-legged gum boots, rubber lined, to each man; one oil-skin coat to each man; one wall tent, nine by nine; one fly, ten by twelve; one tent stove; two dug-out boats; one two-oared skiff large enough to carry one thousand pounds. In the shape of fire-arms, there would be required for each man one Winchester rifle, one breach-loading shot gun (the duck gun is the most suitable for trappers), and one improved



TRAPPER'S CAMP AND OUTFIT.

Colt's pistol, forty-four caliber, with belt and scabbard. Each man would also require one pocket compass and one headlight.

How to use the outfit.—After you have found the stream you want to trap, start in as near the head as you can well use your boats, and there make your camp.

Let one trapper take the upper end of the swamp and the other the lower, each man trapping for three miles on his part of the swamp, and for two or three miles on each side of the stream. In this way about six miles of territory can be trapped at the first camp, and each man can make the circuit in a day, bringing his game in his boat to the camp. Always take your dinner with you on starting out, and reset your traps before you return to camp, as in this way you will lose neither your dinner nor your time in going to and fro. Always search small streams and lakes well on both sides, which will often have to be done by leaving your boat and going afoot.

Unless you follow this rule you will frequently miss the principal game of your territory, such as beaver, otter, coon, mink, and other animals that live about such waters.

After the party has trapped and hunted the first camping ground until the game has become scarce, the man who has worked the upper end of the stream takes up his traps in the morning and returns to camp. Here he finds his companion, who has the care of the skins, with the boat already loaded with the camp equipage and ready to start. Together they get into their boats, go down the stream for six miles, and select a camping place. After they have pitched the tent the trapper goes below the camp and sets his traps. The other trapper, who took the lower end of the first trapping ground, now has the upper end, and on the same day takes up his traps, and sets them on new ground. By this process of work no time is lost, and each man has still his three miles of territory

to work. If at any time there is a surplus of traps, let the man who has charge of the skins try his luck ; but it will be found that he will have very little time to trap.

There is one other way in which I have done some very profitable trapping—that is working single-handed and boarding with the farmers. All that a man needs for trapping in this way, besides a few dollars for necessary expenses, is one dozen beaver or otter traps, one dozen coon traps, one dozen mink traps, one small dug-out boat, one pair short-legged gum boots, rubber lined ; one oil-skin coat, one pocket compass, one forty-four caliber Colt's improved pistol, a valise and some old clothes. Go to most any one of the small streams of the South or West, provided it is large enough to float your boat, find a boarding-place, and trap the stream and its tributaries for three miles each way until the game gets scarce ; then leave your skins with the farmer, take your valise and traps, get in

your boat, go up or down the stream for three miles or the distance you have trapped, and then commence setting your traps again until near night. This done, listen for the nearest cock that crows, get out of your boat, make it fast, go straight to where you heard the cock crow, and you will be pretty sure to find a farm-house ; here call for the landlord, tell him your business and you are quite certain to find yourself a welcome guest. The farmer's wife will be glad enough to have you catch the coons, mink and other animals that kill her fowls. The farmer himself will be no less pleased to have you trap the beaver, and will tell you how often they have cut his fences. From him you can learn of every pond and stream they have dammed up for five miles around. Catch all the game there is within reach ; then find out from your host who is the best man for you to stay with at your next stopping point, three or four miles off in the direction you are traveling. He will often

give you a letter of introduction recommending you as a successful trapper who will do his neighbor a great deal of good. So, leaving your skins with your friend, and having shaken hands all around with the family, say good-bye and move on to your trapping ground. First set out your traps, and when you go to your new boarding place you find yourself a welcome guest again as long as you can catch game. This will be found a very pleasant way of working.

Always leave your skins on the stretchers until you get ready to ship. Try to ship your furs once a month or oftener. When you get ready to make a shipment leave your outfit with the man with whom you are boarding, borrow a horse and saddle from him, gather your furs together from the different farmers, send them off, and then go back and get to work again.

GENERAL HINTS TO TRAPPERS.

THE skins of animals that have been trapped are always valued more highly than those of such as have been shot, for the lead not only makes holes in the skins but injures the fur so that the manufacturer can not use them in making muffs, robes, or trimmings of any kind; he can only work them up into hats and similar goods owing to the checks and bawks which the shot holes have made in the fur. To realize the utmost for skins they must be taken care of at once, cleaned and properly prepared.

In warm weather visit your traps once a day, as otherwise the skins will taint very quickly.

As soon as the animal is dry attend to the skinning and pelting.

Be sure that your pelting-pole is perfectly smooth.

Avoid as much as possible getting grease on the fur.

Scrape off all the surplus flesh and fat and be careful not to go so deep as to cut the fibers of the skin.

If the pelt is tough always commence at the tail and pelt toward the head.

Never dry skins in the sun nor by the fire unless it is very damp weather; and in this case never let them entirely dry by the fire or sun, but just enough to glaze the pelt.

Never let your skins get wet.

Always hang your skins in the shade where the wind can fan them about. Watch them carefully, however, taking pains to remove the fly blows by scraping them off with a knife. If you neglect this the flies will blow them white. The flies will not trouble them after they are once dry.

Never use any preparation of any kind in

curing or drying skins, and do not wash them in water; simply stretch and dry them as they are when taken from the pelting pole. In stretching a cased skin always turn the pelt out.

Always leave the skins on the stretchers until you are ready to ship; if taken off before they are apt to wrinkle and look damaged.

Make your shipments as often as possible, as the skins show up better when first dried.

Never hang your skins in a smoke-house, as the dampness created by the salt causes them to mold.

Never double or roll your skins, for by so doing you are sure to make rough places in the fur.

Always use your gum boots in setting traps. In this way you avoid leaving any scent.

Always feel under the treadle of your trap

after setting it in order to remove the sand or anything that may keep it from falling.

In using a stake for a fastening always drive it until the top goes under the ground.

In setting traps for beaver, or otter, or any water animal, make a slide or trail for it that resembles its own.

Remember that all animals can be attracted by the scent of their kind, which is their urine and musk.

Never set your traps deeper than three inches under the water.

Always keep your traps clear of rust. This may be done by washing and scrubbing them with sand, or smoking them.

Never oil or grease your traps, as many writers have advised, for animals are not accustomed to oil or grease.

Always remove the teeth from the jaws before you throw the trap, or place anything in it that they could strike against, as otherwise the jaws are likely to be injured.

Two men must not try to trap the same ground at once, as one is always in the way of the other.

Never take your gun with you when setting your traps afoot; but you can carry it with you without much trouble when working with your boat.

Always carry your revolver from morning till night, as you will often get shots at game of different kinds.

Always conceal your traps from the sight of game and leave the ground as nearly as possible in the same condition as that in which you found it.

Always turn the treadle of your trap away from the direction in which you expect the game to come, as catching behind the shoulders gives more space in which to capture the animal.

Never bloody the ground with a dead animal where you expect to set traps.

Always notice carefully the feeding

grounds of deer and antelope during the day so that you will know where to hunt with your headlight at night.

Never fire-hunt near your traps as it will disturb the game that you are attempting to capture in them.

If the bead of your rifle is not already perpendicular at the back end with the barrel take a file and make it so. This will not injure it, but will make it shine as bright from the headlight as from the sun.

Always pitch your tent on a ridge or knoll in rainy weather and ditch it on the inside.

Make up your bed every morning before breakfast, and make it a rule of your camp, that if any one lies down on the bed during the day he must be taken by the hands and feet and bumped against a stump or thrown into the creek. Be sure to enforce this law rigidly.

STRETCHERS AND PELTING-POLE AND HOW TO MAKE THEM.



THE MINK STRETCHER.

TAKE a piece of board twenty inches long, six inches wide, and one-half inch thick. Give it a gradual slope of one and a half inches on each edge, leaving the board its full width at one end and half its width at the other, also slope from the edge on both sides to the center, leaving the board its full thickness in the center and one-half its thickness on the edges.



THE MUSKRAT STRETCHER.

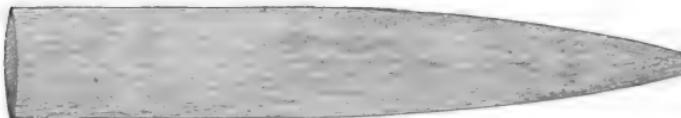
Take a piece of board fifteen inches long, from four to six inches wide, and one-half

inch thick. Starting two inches from the end on the corners give one end an oval round, and slope from the edge to the center on both sides, leaving the board its full thickness in the center and one-half its thickness on the edges.



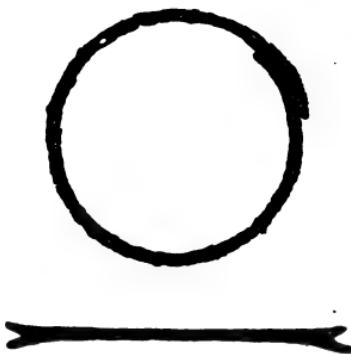
THE SKUNK STRETCHER.

Take a piece of board twenty-four inches long, seven inches wide, and one-half inch thick. Give it a gradual slope of one and one-half inches on each edge, leaving the board its full width at one end and four inches wide at the other; also slope from the edge on both sides to the center, leaving the board its full thickness in the center and one-half its thickness on the edges.



THE OTTER STRETCHER.

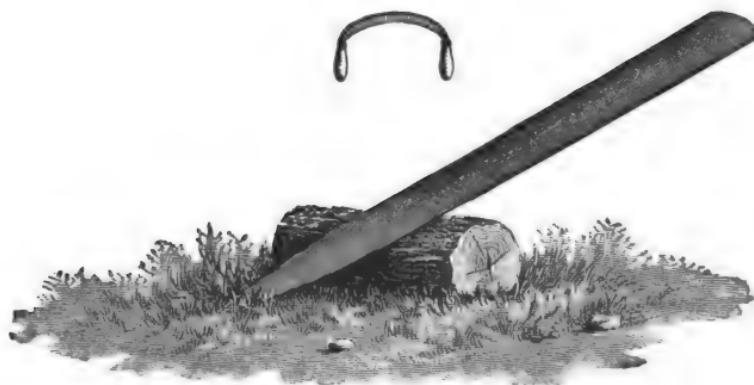
Take a piece of board six feet long, seven inches wide, and one-half inch thick. Give it a gradual slope of one and a half inches on each edge, leaving the board its full width at one end and four inches at the other; also give it a gradual slope from the edges on each side to the center, leaving the board its full thickness in the center and one-half its thickness on the edges.



THE HOOP STRETCHER AND ITS STICK.

These are used for stretching the skin of the beaver, coon, fox, cat, bear, deer, etc. Cut a withie or vine of required strength, bend it

in a circle, forming a hoop the size of the skin to be stretched, and fasten the ends together with twine or bark. Cut a stick four or six inches longer than the diameter of the hoop, make a notch in each end, and hollow the stick out to one-half the size on one side, thus preventing it from touching the skin.



THE PELTING-POLE AND KNIFE.

To make the pelting-pole take a piece of timber five feet long, eight inches wide and four inches thick ; make this as near round as possible on one side, leaving it flat on the

other. Sharpen one end of the pole and then drive it into the ground in a slanting direction until the upper end is, say, three feet from the ground. Put a brace near the lower end to keep the pole from swaying while in use.

SETTING AND BAITING TRAPS.

IN trapping there are two things that must be constantly borne in mind, viz. : first, to so set your trap that the animal will be induced to go to it; and second, to have such a trap as will both catch the game that comes to it, and hold the captive so that he cannot release himself. The steel trap comes nearest to meeting these requirements and has taken the lead over all other animal traps.

Too much preparation must not be made around your traps, and care must be taken not to leave too much scent of yourself. Everything must be left as natural as possible. Nearly every wild animal is extremely shy and is easily frightened off.

In trapping animals the skins of which are valuable, precautions must be taken to pre-

vent injury to their fur, such as may come from their devouring themselves or being devoured by other animals.

A contrivance called a spring-pole is in general use for this purpose and is recommended by many writers (with whom I do not agree) as the best means of saving the animal from its own violence and the depredations of others. It is made as follows:

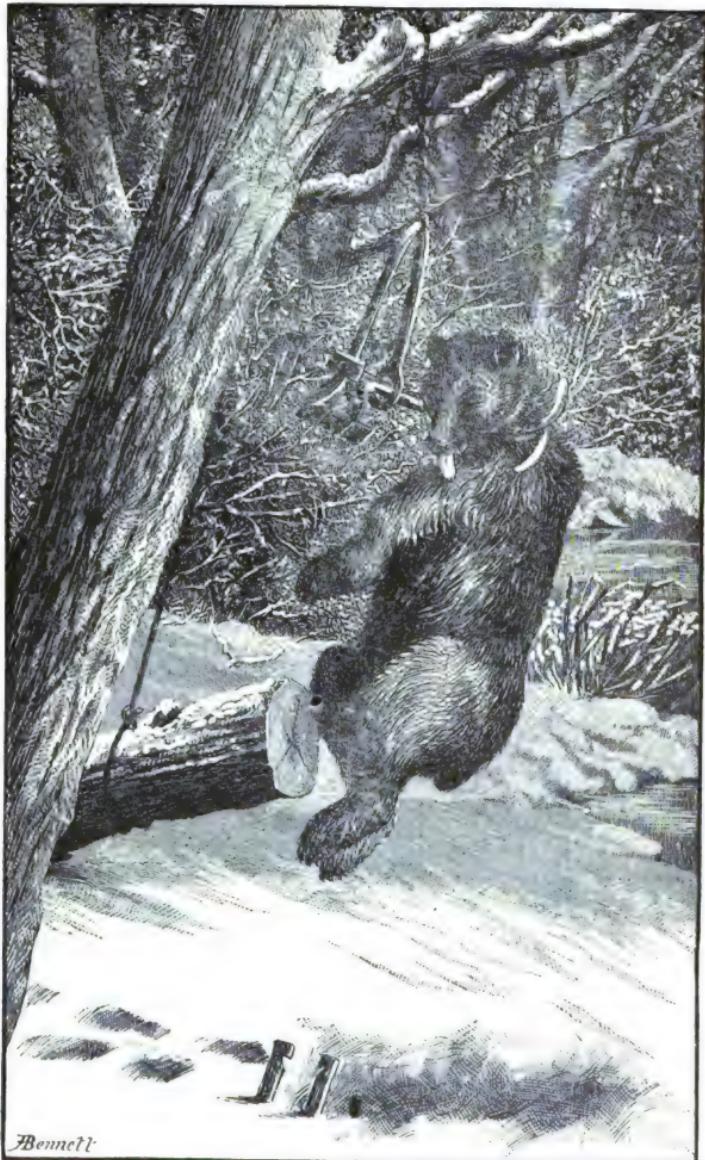
Cut a pole of required size and drive one end of it into the ground; bend it down from the top and attach the trap to it, then fasten the bent pole to a notch or hook on a small tree, or a stake driven in the ground. When the animal is caught it unhooks the pole, which flies back and lifts it up into the air. For at least two reasons this seems to me a very imperfect device. When the spring pole straightens, the chain of the trap winds around it, letting the animal swing back and forth, and giving it every possible chance to wear its skin out against the pole

before morning. Suppose, too, you wanted to swing a bear or some other large animal : you would have to get a steam-engine or two good horses to pull your pole down ; and then you would leave so much sign that no animal would come within one hundred yards of your trap.

The best contrivance for swinging animals is what I call a swing-jack, which is made in this way. Take a rope of required strength and procure a stone or small log, that is, say, one-third heavier than the animal you expect to swing. Tie the rope to the center of the weight, making a slip knot in order that it may draw down tight on it ; throw the other end of the rope over the two limbs of a tree that are on an angle with each other, letting it cross them some three or four feet from the trunk. Cut a stick or lever about one foot in length of sufficient strength to hold the weight, and flatten it on two sides. Cut two stakes strong enough when driven into

the ground to resist the weight. Make a notch in the large ends of the stakes one inch deep; drive them into the ground ten inches apart, with the notches facing each other, and the length of your trap-chain from where you expect to set your trap; then run the rope through the ring of the chain, pull on the rope, and hoist the weight as high as necessary; then place the lever in the notches of the stakes and make the rope fast to its center, letting the ring be above the lever. The animal when caught releases the lever by its struggles, and the weight being the heavier lifts it in the air, giving it no chance to come into contact with anything.

If there is no tree at the point where you want to set your trap, a post can be used by nailing two arms to it at right angles with each other. There should be a notch in the outer end of each arm for the rope to work in.



THE SWING-JACK.

Animals that live in the water require a different contrivance such as the following :

Cut a pole ten or twelve feet long, leaving one branch or fork two or three feet from the small end of the pole to prevent the ring of the trap-chain from slipping off. Take your ax and hack beards on the pole from the butt end to the top. Cut a small hook, place your pole in a slanting position with the small end in the deepest part of the stream. Make the pole fast by driving it into the bed of the stream or lake with your ax ; spring the upper end down until it goes under the water, slip the chain-ring over this end and be sure it is free to traverse the full length of the pole ; make the latter fast at the upper end of the hook. When



the animal is caught he plunges in the water toward the lower end of the pole, the ring sliding down the pole to the bottom of the stream, and the beards preventing the animal from pulling the ring up the pole and going ashore. A short chain does not permit the game to even reach the surface.

THE PROPER SEASON FOR TRAPPING.

ALL furs are best in the three months of December, January and February, and are very good in March if the spring is late; though trapping can be made profitable any time between the first of October and the middle of April in the Southern and Western States, and for a month later in the Northern States. All fur skins are prime in the above-named months, the pelts being white and classed prime by fur dealers; the fur is then glossy and of the richest color.

There are some variations according to the latitude as to the exact period at which furs become prime, the more northerly being a little in advance.

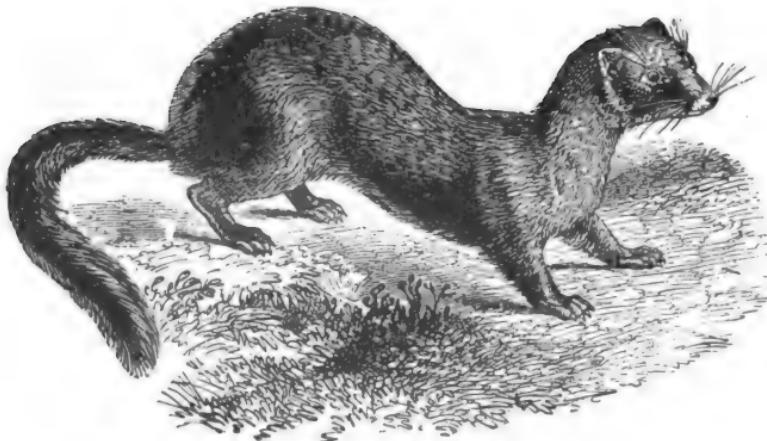
Trappers are liable to begin too early in

the season in consequence of which much poor fur is caught ; this must be sold at low prices, and is unprofitable to the trapper, the fur buyer and the manufacturer.

In the spring dark or blue spots can be noticed on the pelt of the skins, and this is an indication that the animal has commenced shedding, and a sure sign that it is about time to stop trapping. It will not be long after these spots appear that the furs are worthless. All animals shed their fur once a year, commencing generally the first of April and finishing about the first of June.

THE MINK.

THE mink is found in nearly all parts of the United States, but is most numerous in the South. It subsists on birds, fish, fowls,



rabbits and other small animals. It has its young once a year, generally in the month of April, having from two to four at a birth. The mink is a great fisher and chicken-roost

robber, making its home for the most part in hollow logs and underground holes, generally near water.

The baits for the mink are made as follows :

Take two ounces of the mink's urine and add to it the musk of one mink (this is found near the vent), and also one ounce of fish oil. This is made by cutting fish in small pieces and placing them in a loosely stopped bottle. If this be hung in the sun for two weeks, the fish will rot and the oil rise to the top. The bait thus made is called natural bait.

Or, take the flesh of rabbits, birds or fowls, or the flesh of the mink itself; but these baits are greatly helped by using one or two drops of the natural bait.

In hunting the mink, go near the edge of streams and lakes and search for its trails. On finding them, place some of your traps just in the edge of the water, and make them

fast with a stake, taking pains to conceal them well. Place the flesh bait on each side of the trap six inches from it. The mink after getting one of the baits will attempt to cross the trap to get the other.

In setting on dry land for the mink, it is best to place the trap near water anyway, as the animal's trail is in the water or just on the bank. Find a crevice or hole that forms a V or make one by laying two small logs together, forming a right angle. Place the bait in the small end of the angle or V and the trap in the large end, and having made it fast to a stake, cover the top of the V or angle with bark or sticks. Traps can be set every thirty yards for the mink when you see plenty of fresh signs about. If the mink is visiting your chicken coop, stop all the holes he can go through but one, letting this be at the bottom of the coop. Place the trap as near the hole on the outside as you can get it, conceal it well and you will

catch Mr. Mink the first night he comes around.

Skin the mink by starting the knife in one hind foot, running it to the vent and thence to the other hind foot. Take the skin off whole and stretch it on the mink stretcher described on page 26.

THE MUSKRAT.



THE muskrat abounds in the Northern, Eastern and Western States, but is very scarce in the South. It lives in holes in the banks of streams, and houses of sticks and mud, which it builds some distance from the banks on tussocks and logs. The rat can be trapped on land or in the water.

To make bait for the rat, take the musk of one rat and add to it two ounces of its urine. Of this use two or three drops for a bait. The musk of the rat is found near the vent.

Rats can be trapped successfully without baits. This is done by hunting their feeding grounds. These you can find by going along the edge of the water. On discovering the rat's house, go above and below it and you will soon find where they make trails or runs in shallow water. Set your traps across these trails, letting them go two or three inches under the water and cover them with wet leaves, grass or mud; fasten the traps to stakes on one side of the trail and as far from it as the chain will let it go.

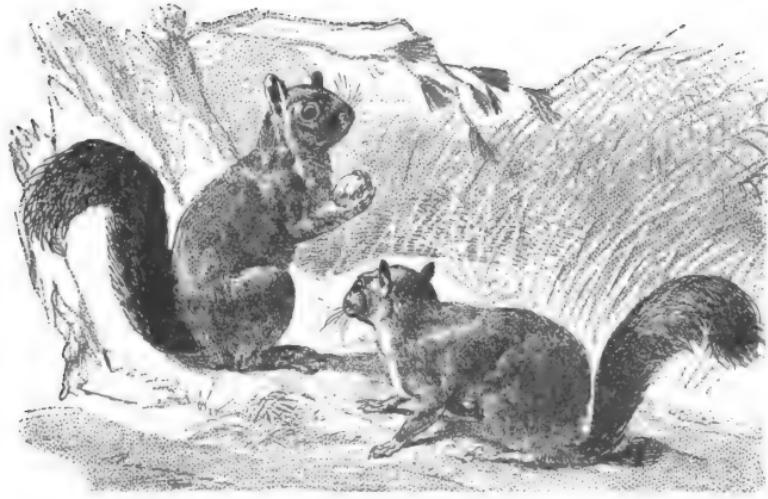
When setting your traps on the bank, dig a hole the size of the trap, letting it rest on a level with the ground, and cover it with the dirt you take out of the hole. Let fall one or two drops of your bait on each side of the trap. It is not necessary to use the swinging-

jack or drowning-pole for the rat as the trap will soon choke or squeeze it to death.

Skin the rat by starting the knife in the center of the lower lip, split the hide for two or three inches, skin around the head and take the hide off whole. Stretch the skin on the rat stretcher described on page 26, letting the round end go in the skin and making it fast with three or four tacks.

THE SQUIRREL.

THE squirrel is found in most parts of the United States, but is most numerous in the South. There are three varieties, the gray,

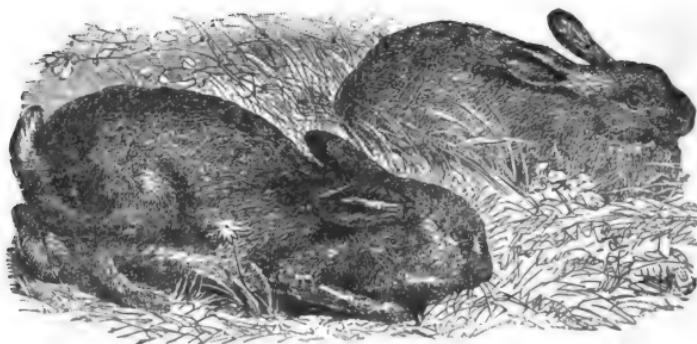


the fox, and the ground squirrel. The two former live in hollow trees; the latter burrows in the ground. The squirrel subsists on mast, corn, buds, and the like.

Use corn for bait. Go where the squirrel lives and make a trail by dropping shelled corn every three or four inches. Set traps every twenty or thirty feet in the trail ; conceal them well and make them fast to stakes. The little fellow on finding the trail of corn will attempt to follow it.

Try this process and you will have a mess of squirrels every day.

THE RABBIT.



THE rabbit is found throughout the United States generally. Besides the common species, there is a larger variety called the mule-eared rabbit which is found in the prairie countries. The rabbit has no particular den or place to stay, but makes himself at home anywhere around the farm in the hedges and underbrush, and at night prowls the gardens, fields, and orchards. The rabbit subsists on bark and vegetables of different kinds, and is very destructive to gardens and young

orchards, cutting the plants and barking the young trees.

For bait, turnips, potatoes or apples may be used.

In order to trap the rabbit, search the farm for its trails in gullies and drains, and also notice where it regularly goes through the fences. Set your trap in its path within two or three inches of the fence, conceal it well, and make it fast to a stake. No bait is needed at a place like this.

In drains or gullies where you have seen trails, set the trap in the trail, making it fast to a stake. Place the bait within three or four inches of the trap on each side. After finding one bait, the rabbit will go along slowly in order to get the other one.

Skin the rabbit by splitting the skin from one hind foot to the other in the manner described for the mink ; take the hide off whole and stretch it on the mink stretcher described on page 26.

THE SKUNK.



THE skunk inhabits every State in the Union, burrowing generally for its home in a high, dry country. It increases very fast,

having its young once a year, generally in the month of May, and having from two to six young at a birth. It subsists on rats, birds, frogs, and similar food. The skunk is a very clumsy animal, and depends on slipping on its prey and catching it before it is aware of the enemy's presence.

For bait for the skunk, the flesh of rats, birds or fowls of any kind may be used.

In hunting this animal, search the hills and hollows of dry regions. The scent of its musk will generally be guide enough to bring you to its den, and on finding it you will see trails running in almost every direction from it. Place your traps on the trails, well concealed, and make them fast to stakes. Drop your bait on each side of the trap and six inches from it.

In order to take the scent from the skunk before skinning, tie the carcass in swift running water, with the head down stream, and leave it there for twenty-four hours.

To skin the skunk, start the knife in one hind foot and split the skin to the vent and from there to the other hind foot. Take the skin off whole and stretch it on the skunk stretcher described on page 27.

THE OTTER.



THE otter is found in most of the United States, but is by far more numerous in the South and West than elsewhere. It lives in holes in the banks of streams and lakes, subsisting principally on fish. It has its young once a year, generally in the month of April, having from two to four at a birth. In hunt-

ing otter it is usual to find the two old ones and their young living together. It can be trapped on land or in the water ; but as its power of scenting is very sharp a great deal of precaution must be used.

The baits for the otter are made as follows :

To make the natural bait take two ounces of the otter urine, two ounces fish oil and five drops otter musk, mix well and use three or four drops for a bait. The musk is found near the vent in two small sacs.

The oil of cinnamon is also a first-rate bait ; use two or three drops of it on the otter slide.

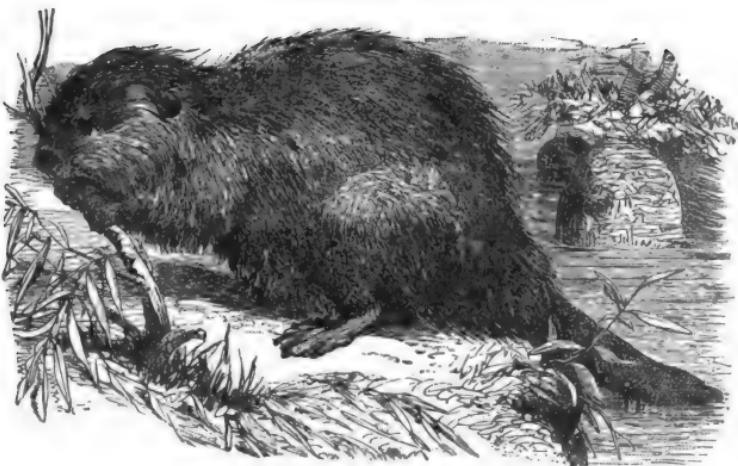
The best bait, however, is made of the musk of the skunk, which is found in a sac near the vent. In removing it split the skin around the sac and take it out ; take all the surplus flesh off and wash it clean ; split it open and drop it in two ounces of alcohol. Use two or three drops for a bait.

In hunting the otter you will see its tracks on sand bars and places where it wallows in the sand. It also uses steep banks for its slide, always depositing there its dung, which consists of fish scales and bones. Seeing this sign, set your trap at the foot of the slide, three inches under the water, and use a drowning pole, placing it as far to one side as the chain will permit it to go. Let the upper end of the pole go under the water for a foot or more. Dig a hole in the slide the size of your trap, place the trap in it on a level with the ground and cover it nicely with the earth from the hole, leaving the slide as natural as you found it. Drop the bait six inches above the trap on the slide, using in this place the natural bait. Now go ten or twelve feet above or below the slide, and with your ax make another that resembles the original slide ; set your trap in the same manner and use the bait made of the musk of the skunk.

Here is another way of setting for the otter. On the upper end of the slide you will find what is called their wallowing places, which are connected by a trail. Set the trap on this trail, well concealed and fastened to a stake ; leave everything as natural as you found it. Use one or two drops of the oil of cinnamon six inches from the trap on each side. Never try to swing the otter in the air as he is too sharp to stand any "banjo-work" of that kind.

Skin the otter by starting the knife at one hind foot, split the skin straight to the vent, and from there to the other hind foot ; start then at the vent and split the tail to the end ; take the hide off whole and stretch it on the otter stretcher as described on pages 27 and 28

THE BEAVER.



THE beaver is found generally throughout the United States, but in greater numbers in the South and West. This is a water animal, and lives in holes in the banks of streams and houses which it makes of sticks and mud in the center of lakes. Its food is bark, corn, mast, grass, and the like. It has its young

once a year, generally in the month of April, giving birth to from two to six at a time, but its increase is not rapid, the young requiring four years in which to get their growth. In hunting beaver you will find from two to eighteen in a family. Many writers say the beaver has as many as two hundred in its family, but that is a mistake.

Before describing the baits for the beaver it is first necessary to mention the castor, or bark sacs, and the oil stones of that animal. These are found in both sexes in four sacs near the vent; there being two of the bark sacs and two of the oil sacs or stones. In taking these from the beaver cut around the sacs, leaving all four together, and clean off all the flesh. You will know the castor sacs by their being grown together at the small ends; these contain a yellow substance while the oil stones are of a long, round shape and contain an oily substance.

In order to obtain the contents of the cas-

tor sacs, tie the small ends with twine, and rub them gently between your hands until the musk seems to be in a soft state; then cut a hole in the large end of the sac and press out its substance. To get the oil from the oil stone, cut the small end off and squeeze the stone.

The baits of the beaver are made as follows:

Take the castor sacs of one beaver, add twenty drops of oil of cinnamon, ten drops of oil of anise and enough urine of the beaver to make the bait of about the consistency of mush.

Take the castor sacs of one beaver, add seven drops of the oil of sassafras, seven drops of the oil of anise, and ten drops of the oil from the oil stone.

Take the castor sacs of one beaver, add ten drops Jamaica rum, one drop of oil of anise, one drop oil of cloves, one drop oil of sassafras, and two drops of oil of rhodium.

Take the castor sacs of one beaver, add ten drops of the oil from the oil stone and enough of the beaver's urine to make the bait of the consistency of mush ; this last is called natural bait.

In hunting the beaver you will find small trees cut down and barked by them, and will come across their dams on small streams and the outlets of lakes and the slides which they make by throwing mud out of the water on the banks. You can feel pretty sure that you have beaver near by when you find the timber freshly cut, the dams recently worked on, and the slides showing evidences of having been lately used and played on. Set traps on all the fresh slides where the water is deep enough to use your drowning-pole ; and in deciding as to the depth you should be governed by the length of your trap-chain.

For the first two nights do not use any bait on the slides made by the beaver, but

simply set the trap in the lower end of the slide, three inches under the water; cover it lightly with wet leaves and mud, and leave everything so far as possible as natural as when you found it. By going along the banks you will find places where you can use your drowning-pole; here make a slide as near like the original as you can by shoving leaves out of the water on to the bank; set the trap three inches under the water at the foot of your slide, taking pains to conceal it well with leaves and mud, and make it fast to the drowning-pole. Place the bait six inches above the trap on a leaf in the slide and place another leaf over it and thus prevent the sun from killing the bait. Set as many traps as you think there are beavers. Use the perfumed bait, that is, any one of the first three described above, on the slides you make yourself for the first two nights. Then, if you think you have not caught all of the beavers, bait the traps that have been set on

the original slides with natural bait ; this will fool the oldest beaver that lives.

Use your boat if possible while setting traps for beaver, but if you cannot do that, make use of your rubber boots, being careful not to drag through the brush.

Skin the beaver by starting the knife in the center of the under lip, split the skin to the tail, and skin the legs whole ; be careful and not leave any fat or pelt on the skin, as it is much easier to take off with the knife while skinning than after you have gotten the skin off.

Use the hoop-stretcher in stretching the beaver or any other open skin. Cut small holes about two inches apart around the edge of the skin and make it fast to the hoop with twine or bark ; place the stretching stick lengthwise with the skin and stretch the hoop until the skin is perfectly tight.

The hoop-stretcher is described on page 28.

THE RACCOON.



THE raccoon exists to some extent in nearly all parts of the United States, but is most numerous in the South and West. It lives in hollow trees and its own burrows, subsisting principally on corn, mast, fish, frogs, and insects. It increases at a rapid rate, getting its growth in one year and usu-

ally having from two to six young yearly, generally in the month of May. The coon can be trapped on land or in the water. It is a great craw-fish and frog hunter, and very often hunts the chicken-roost.

The flesh of fish, birds, or fowls of any kind may be used for bait alone, or, still better, together with two drops of the oil of cinnamon let fall near the trap. This will draw the coon a long way.

But the best bait is made by adding to two ounces of honey thirty drops of the oil of cinnamon; use five or six drops of this for a bait.

In hunting the coon go to the banks of streams, lakes, or ponds, and look for its tracks and trails in the edge of the water. From these, by observing carefully, you will find trails leading to the den. Set your traps across these trails, letting them down on a level with the ground by digging a hole the size of your trap, which, when set, you

will do well to conceal from the sight of the animal by a covering of leaves or grass. Make the trap fast to a stake, and place the bait five or six inches from it on each side.

If setting in water, place **the bait on a stick**, letting it be above the water. The animal after getting one bait will attempt to cross the trap to get the other. Traps may be set on the trails forty yards apart.

The skin of the raccoon should be removed and stretched in the same manner as that of the beaver, except that the legs should be split. See page 64.

THE OPOSSUM.



THE opossum is commonly found in most of the United States, and in some of them is very numerous. It makes its home in hollow

logs and burrows in the ground. It multiplies very rapidly, having its young once a year, generally in the month of May. Its means of subsistence are wild grapes, berries, persimmons, fowls of all kinds, and dead horses and cows, when it can find them.

The opossum is a great chicken-roost robber, and, being a very clumsy animal, depends on slipping on to the roosts and getting hold of the fowls before they are aware of its presence.

The bait for the opossum is made by adding to two ounces of grapes or persimmons twenty drops oil of cinnamon and ten drops oil of anise.

Or, take the flesh of birds or fowls and use two or three drops oil of anise or cinnamon near the bait. This will attract the opossum for a long way, and on coming near he will see or smell the bait and attempt to get it. The opossum must be trapped on dry land.

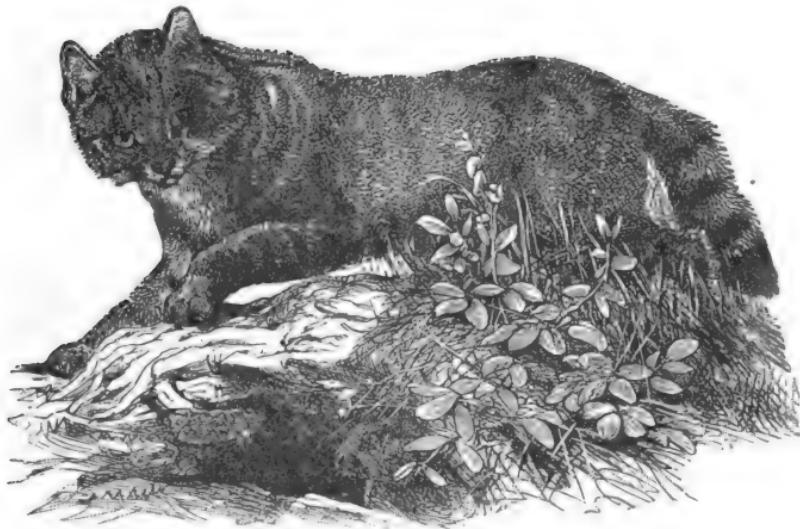
In hunting this animal, go to where there

are grapes or persimmons to be found and look for its tracks. On finding them, look further for a crevice or angle in the forks of a log or roots of a tree; place the trap in the large portion of the angle, and having concealed it well, make it fast to a stake. Place the bait six inches from the trap in the small portion of the angle.

If the opossum has been visiting the chicken-roost, and has killed one of the fowls, place its carcass in some hole or corner near where it was left; then set your trap in the manner just described and you will catch the 'possum the next night.

The skin of the opossum should be removed and stretched in the same manner as that of the beaver, except that the legs should be split. See page 64.

THE WILDCAT.



THE wildcat is found principally in the Southern and Western portions of the United States. It subsists on squirrels, rabbits, birds, and fowls of all kinds, and dwells in burrows in the ground. It has its young once a year, generally in the month of May, having from two to six young at a birth.

Fresh squirrels, rabbits, birds or fowls of any kind will serve as a bait for the wildcat.

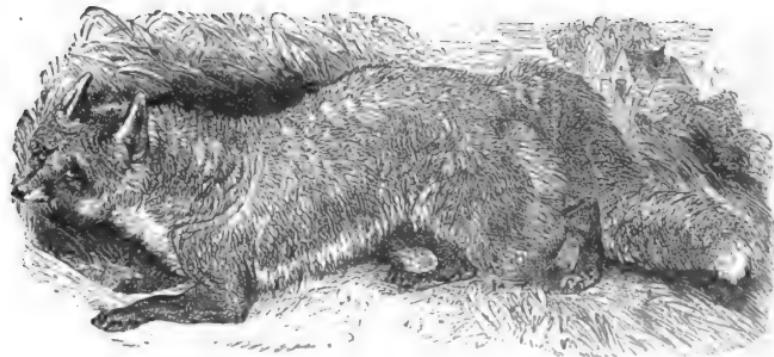
Save the blood of the fowl and use it in making trails for your traps, also use the urine of the cat on or near your bait. The cat, in striking the trails of blood, will follow them to the traps, and on smelling the scent of its kind will come to the bait without fear.

In hunting the wildcat, search for its tracks in gullies and ravines, near water in the woods, and look out for its dung on knolls or logs that cross streams. Set your trap in such a ravine, conceal it well, and make it fast to a stake; drop a bait on each side of it, about six inches from it; make trails from the bait by dropping blood on each side of the trap for fifteen or twenty feet, and use three or four drops of urine near the bait. When the animal finds the trails of blood, it will follow them to the bait. After getting one of the baits it will attempt to cross the trap to get the other.

Or, set a trap near the knoll where you find the dung, and one near the log where it crosses the stream in the manner just described. One or two drops of oil of sassafras may be used near the bait, and will draw your game a long way. By this process you will soon break into the arrangements of the wildcat.

The directions for removing and stretching the skin of the beaver, given on page 64, apply to the wildcat, except that the legs of the latter should be split.

THE FOX.



FOXES are of three kinds : the gray, the red, and the silver fox. The two former are found in almost all parts of the United States, but in the greatest numbers in the South and West. The silver fox is not found in the South, but is very numerous in portions of the North.

The fox generally burrows in the ground near water, but sometimes stays in thick cane-brakes and deadenings without living in holes.

It has from two to six young once a year, generally in the month of May.

As bait for the fox, use fresh rabbits, birds, or fowls of any kind in small pieces ; save the blood of the rabbit or fowl, using it the same day you get it in order that it may be fresh. After catching one fox, save its urine, and go to their dung hills that are fresh, and mix the dung and urine, making a thin mush of them.

In hunting the fox, go along the stream near the top of the bluff or bank, and look for the tracks of the fox and for holes that are large enough for it to live in. On finding holes recently inhabited you will also see trails leading to the water and to little knolls where the fox leaves its dung.

You will also find trails leading to logs that lie across streams and serve the fox as bridges for crossing.

Set one trap on the trail that runs to the water, hiding it nicely and making it fast to a stake on one side of the trail ; drive the stake

until the top goes under the ground, and leave everything as natural as you found it. Use no bait on this trail.

Set one trap on the trail between the den and the knoll where the dung is dropped ; conceal and fasten it in the manner just described. Use a little of the natural bait five or six inches from the trap toward the dung pile.

Place one trap say half-way between the den and the log used for crossing a stream. Also find a log that forks and forms a V, or a crevice at the foot of a tree. Place the bait in the sharp end of the V or crevice, using fresh rabbits or fowls for bait, and use a little of the natural bait too. Place the trap eight or ten inches from the bait in the outer end of the crevice, concealing it well and making it fast to a stake, and leaving everything as natural as possible. Sprinkle blood, making a trail each side of your trap for fifteen or twenty feet. The animal on striking these blood trails will follow them to

the trap and smelling his own kind will attempt to get the bait without fear.

Go to the crossing log and on observing closely you will find where the fox gets up and down on the log. On finding this set your trap on the trail twelve inches from the log, concealing it well and making it fast to a stake. Drop blood on the log and on each side of the trap, and let fall also a few drops of the natural bait near the trap. The fox on finding the blood and scent of his own species will attempt to trail it over the trap without fear. By this process you will catch your family of foxes in two or three nights.

Never try to swing the fox in the air as he is too sharp to stand any monkeying of that kind.

The skin of the fox should be removed and stretched in the manner described for the beaver on page 64, except that the legs should be split.

THE WOLF.



THREE kinds of wolves are found in the United States, the black, the gray and the prairie wolf. This is a very shy animal and is naturally most numerous in the Western and least settled States and Territories. The

wolf remains in the thickest of the forest during the day and at night comes out and prowls the surrounding country. It has its young once, and sometimes twice a year, having from two to four at a birth. It subsists on sheep, hogs, deer, young calves, and such other animals as it can destroy. The wolves collect in large packs in order to capture their prey. This animal must be trapped on dry ground or in very shallow water.

As bait for the wolf there may be used the blood, flesh, or entrails of sheep, hogs, deer, calves, rabbits, or any other animal that does not subsist on flesh.

To make the natural bait take two ounces of the urine of the wolf and add one-quarter ounce of asafetida. This is used on the trails and near the bait.

In hunting wolves go along the edge of the thickest woods late in the evening and, if there are any wolves about, you will be likely to hear them howl. On finding their tracks

tie a string to your bait and drag it for one hundred or two hundred yards to a large tree, to which you may fasten it, letting it swing five feet from the ground. Place two or three traps at the foot of the tree, the length of their chains apart; conceal them well and make them fast to a stake, leaving everything about the place as natural as you can. Place two or three traps on the trail, using eight or ten drops of the mixture of urine and asafetida on both sides of your traps.

The wolves on striking this trail will follow it to the bait, some getting caught on the trail and some at the foot of the tree.

Remove and stretch the skin of the wolf in the manner described for that of the beaver on page 64, but the legs of the wolf should be split.

THE BEAR.



THE bear has been driven from the greater portion of the North by the thick settlement of that part of the country, but is still found to some extent in the South and West.

This animal lives in the wildest districts, generally in large cane-brakes; it cuts the cane and makes what is called the bear-house,

under which it crawls and remains during the day, though sometimes denning in hollow logs and trees.

The bear does not stir about much during the three winter months, but lies in its house or den, where it is supposed to suck its paws for a living. It has two cubs once a year, generally in the month of May. The bear subsists on corn, berries, mast, and any kind of flesh it can catch.

The bait for the bear is simple and is made by adding ten drops of oil of anise to one pint of honey. Use forty or fifty drops for a bait. The trapping must be done on dry land.

In hunting the bear in the fall and spring, go along the banks of lakes and streams near thick forests and cane-brakes, where you suppose there is bear, and search for the trails made in going to water. If the trail is fresh, set a trap on it as near the water as you can find a tree suitable to make your swinging-jack. It requires three men to set a bear trap

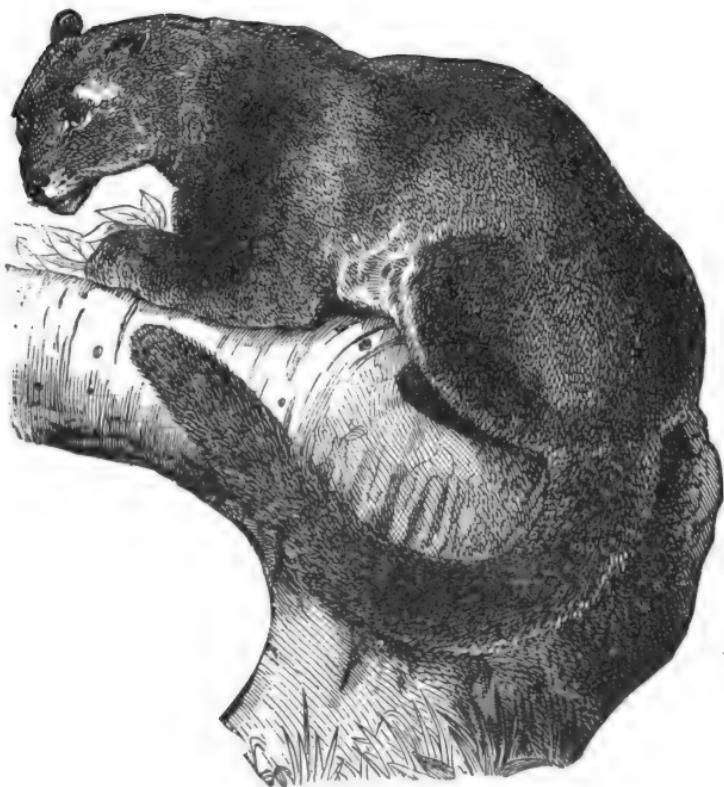
or hoist a log large enough to swing the bear. Conceal the trap well and leave everything as you found it. Do not use any bait on the trail, but go up the trail for fifty yards or more until you find an open place on one side or the other ; here set a trap twenty feet on one side of the trail in the manner just described, using your swinging-jack. Commencing at the trail, let fall one drop of the bait every two feet until you get within two feet of your trap, then, skipping that, place forty or fifty drops of the bait on the opposite side and two feet from it. The bear in traveling his own trail will strike the trail of bait and follow it over the trap.

If you find the bear destroying your corn in the field, follow along the fence until you find where its trail crosses it. Set the trap on the inside five or six feet from the fence on the trail, and drop three or four ears of corn and three or four drops of your bait on the opposite side of the trap from the fence.

Conceal the trap well and use the swinging-jack as described. Always set your trap for bear in the morning, so that your scent will get off before night.

In removing and stretching the skin of the bear follow the directions given for the beaver on page 64, but split the legs of the bear.

THE PANTHER.



THE panther is scarce in the Northern and Eastern States but is still numerous in parts

of the South and West. It lives in the thickest forests and cane-brakes to be found, keeping well out of sight during the day but at night prowling about the surrounding country capturing sheep, hogs, young calves, deer and any animal that it can kill. It is heard screaming in the early part of the night and its tracks are found about the farm the next morning, and probably, too, half a dozen sheep with their throats cut. The panther drinks the blood of his victims, and if there is a drove or herd will make a meal entirely on blood, killing sometimes as many as five or six animals. It has its young once a year, generally in the month of May, having from three to four at a birth. The only bait for a panther is its urine or a live sheep, goat or hog, for it will not eat anything it does not itself kill.

The panther must be trapped on dry land as it seldom goes into water. In hunting the panther go near thick cane-brakes or forests late in the evening, where you think the pan-

ther lives, and both look for its tracks and listen for its screams. When convinced that you are in the vicinity of the panther build a pen in the form of a V, leaving the large end open; cover the top of the pen with small poles or trees and place a live sheep, goat or hog in the small end carefully secured to it with a rope. Set your trap in the large end of the pen, conceal it well and use the swinging-jack for a fastening. If the panther does not come the first night, feed and water the sheep, for it will be pretty sure to find the bait and come in a few nights and attempt to get it.

On catching one by this process be sure to save its urine. Look with special care for its tracks where logs reach across streams. On finding tracks at such a place, let fall one drop of the animal's urine every two or three feet on the log and on the ground at each end for some distance from it, making in this way a trail. Place a trap on this trail near the log

and conceal it well, using the swinging-jack for a fastening. Bait the trail every day until you catch your panther.

The skin of the panther should be removed and stretched in the manner described for that of the beaver on page 64, except that the legs of the former should be split.



THE DEEP.

THE DEER.

THE deer, though very scarce in the North and East of the United States, is still numerous in parts of the South and West. It has its young once a year, generally in the month of May. It subsists on corn, peas, grass and vegetation of various kinds, generally feeding until eight or nine o'clock in the morning, then lying down until late in the evening (except in rainy weather), when it gets up and feeds until late in the night, after which it lies down again until nearly daylight. The deer has regular crossings on streams and roads and regular trails which it uses in the fall of the year while rutting.

To make the bait for this animal, take two ounces of the deer's urine, and five drops of the oil of anise, and the musk of one deer.

The musk is found in a small hole in the upper end of the split of the hoof, and can be taken out with a small knife blade.

In hunting with a view to trapping deer, look for their crossings on streams and the trails they make in rutting time. Place the traps on the trails, conceal them well, and make them fast to the swinging-jack. Drop the bait along the trail for some distance on each side of the trap. This is done in order to make the deer go slowly, so that it will not jump over the trap without throwing it.

If the deer bothers your field, go around it until you find where the animal jumps the fence, which it does every night in the same place. Set the trap inside the fence in the place where the animal lights, making it fast to the swinging-jack.

Skin the deer by starting the knife in the under lip and split to the tail, then split each leg and stretch the skin on the round stretcher.

THE WILD TURKEY.

THE wild turkey has been driven from the North by the thick settlement of that part of



the country, but is yet found in large numbers in parts of the South and West. It commences laying in March and hatches its young in May.

* The old and young ones stay in flocks from the time the young are hatched until the mother turkey begins to lay again. The season for trapping the wild turkey is from the 1st of October until the 1st of March, and the method of doing it is quite simple. Go wherever you are in the habit of seeing the wild turkey, and make a trail of shelled corn. Let the turkey get your corn for two or three days, then place several *C* or beaver traps (see page 114) on the trail well concealed from view. Rebait the trail and also drop some corn on the traps, setting them twice the length of their chains apart.

When one turkey gets caught the rest do not know what it is flopping about, and run up and begin to fight it. Very often in this way you will catch the principal part of the flock the first setting.

The Newhouse, or any trap that catches by the foot, will not answer for this work, for the turkey will wring his foot off.

THE PRAIRIE DOG.



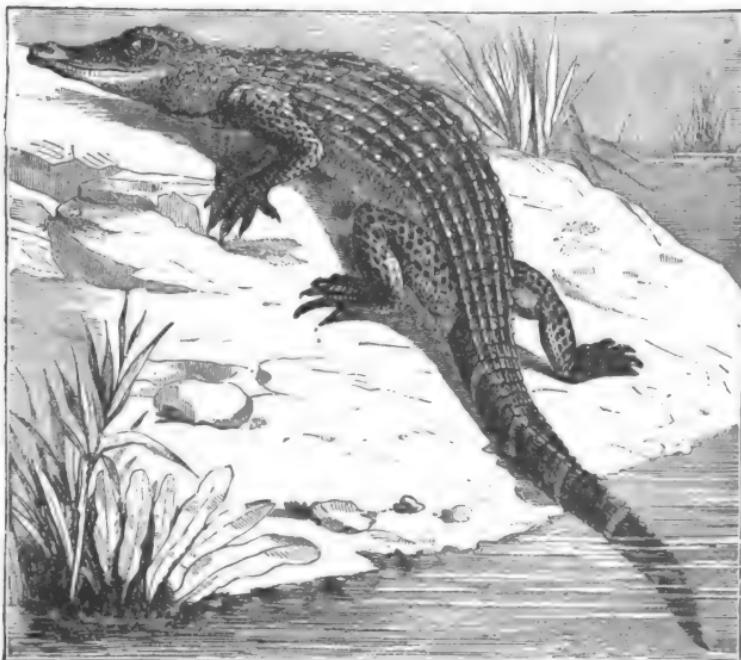
THE prairie dog is found in the Southern and Western prairie countries. Numbers of them live together in holes they make in the ground, the places they live in being called

prairie dog towns by the Western people. Some of these "towns" cover as much as three acres of ground, their inhabitants subsisting principally on grass and nuts. They are very daring and stand over their holes and bark at a stranger who approaches their town. If you shoot one while it is standing over its hole you will never get its body, as the hole is perpendicular for four or five feet, and the animal, when in its struggles it falls into it, gets entirely out of your reach.

In order to catch the prairie dog set five or six dozen of the *A* traps (see page 112) in the dog town, and conceal them well from the sight of the dogs, having made them fast to stakes. In a few hours you will have more dogs than you will know what to do with. No bait is used in trapping them.

In skinning the prairie dog, the legs should be split, otherwise the skin should be removed and stretched in the same manner as that of the beaver. See page 64.

THE ALLIGATOR.



THE alligator is found only in the South, in some parts of which it is very numerous. It increases very fast and subsists on fish, turtles, or any animals it can catch in or near the water.

As bait for the alligator, flesh of any kind may be used.

In order to find the proper place to trap the alligator go along the edges of streams or lakes until you notice where it crawls out to sun, and if it is a fair day you will be pretty sure to find the alligator himself. All that you will find it necessary to do will be to cut a stake of sufficient strength to hold your game, then, when you find the slides, set the trap four or five inches under water and make it fast to the stake. Place the bait twelve inches from the trap between it and the bank in the water. The alligator will be attracted by the scent of the bait and will attempt to get it. Use the *D* trap (see page 115) for the alligator.

Skin by splitting the hide from the center of the under lip to the end of the tail and split the legs. The skin does not need stretching.

HOW TO HUNT THE BEAR.

FIND a trail where the bear comes to water and then select a tree that you can climb, twenty or thirty yards to one side of the trail. About ten o'clock in the morning take a position in the tree from which you can keep a close watch up the trail. On seeing the bear, get all ready to shoot, letting Bruin come as close as you want him to, then give a bleat and he will stop. That is the time for you to shoot if your finger doesn't fail to work.

In the spring of the year the bear feeds on buds ; this is called lapping by bear hunters. The bear climbs the trees and pulls the small limbs to him, breaking them off and making a great racket.

In order to find the bear when lapping, go

late in the evening or early in the morning and listen for the breaking of the limbs. On hearing this, notice which way the wind is blowing and then proceed so that the wind will blow from the animal to you. When you get near the tree he is in, advance so that you can hide yourself behind other trees until you get close enough to shoot him out, and be careful not to let him fall on you.

The bear can be hunted successfully with dogs. The cross between the cur and the hound makes the best bear dog. In hunting with dogs search for the tracks and crossings and notice which way the tracks are going. Follow them and hiss your dogs, leaving a man at every crossing. When the dogs jump the bear the man who does the driving follows the dogs, bringing Bruin to bay. The men at the crossings wait for their chance to shoot. Very often the bear will take a near route and miss the men on the

stands. When this is the case listen for the dogs, try to get the course they are running, and make an effort to get in ahead of them. In doing this take stands for the bear again and again, and when you get a shot put it well that you may get pay for your work.

HOW TO HUNT THE DEER BY DAY OR NIGHT.

In hunting the deer, there is one point very necessary to know, and that is, how to get close enough to get a shot after sighting the deer. This animal in feeding always shakes its tail just before it raises its head to look, and shakes it again just before it lowers its head again to feed. The deer pays but little attention to what is going on around it when it has its head down.

When still-hunting, walk very slowly and survey the ground well ahead of you. Stop at times and look as far in advance as your eyes will permit you to see. On sighting the deer, look at it well until you see that it has its head up; then watch the tail; when it shakes walk fast, still watching the tail; when

it shakes again, stop and stand stock-still until it shakes again; then advance, and so on until you get close enough to shoot. If there are more than one, when you shoot stand perfectly still; the rest are not apt to run off immediately after the first shot; they may make a jump or two and then stop and look: at this moment raise your gun and bring another down—that is, if you have not got the buck ague too bad.

In the fall of the year the deer do their rutting, commencing about the first frost. The male, or buck deer, make what are called buck-scrapes by pawing the ground with their feet like a bull, generally near a tree where they can wring the limbs or branches with their horns while pawing. Both sexes of the deer visit the buck-scrapes early in the morning. The doe generally comes first, then the buck. Having found a buck-scarpe, go early in the morning, say at daylight; conceal yourself thirty or forty yards to one side of the

scrape, keep quiet and watch the scrape. When the doe comes shoot her down, and let her lie there, you keeping your position and waiting for the buck. Watch the scrape until nine o'clock, and you will probably have a chance to kill two or three. This is an effective way to hunt deer. I have killed as many as three on one scrape in a single morning.

The deer feeds in open woods, prairies and fields at night. You will do well to keep a look-out while hunting in the day for its fresh tracks and dung, so that at night you will be prepared to take your head-light and pocket compass and hunt where you have seen the fresh sign. Keep your compass in your hand and notice it often. Go straight for some distance, then turn to the right or left, as, if you do not do this, you will get lost and hunt the same ground several times over. The deer's eyes shine a bright red, and, when you are close enough to shoot, seem to be two or three inches apart. When you discover the

eyes of the deer, if it is some distance from you, you can scarcely distinguish them apart ; they look like a streak of fire. When this is the case do not go straight forward, but advance at an angle with the deer until you can see a space of two or three inches between its eyes. Aim for the space, and if you are a good shot your bullet will penetrate the brain.

In order to distinguish the eyes of the deer from those of sheep, goats, cattle, hares, dogs, and other animals, watch the eyes closely for two or three minutes, and if the animal bats its eyes it is not a deer or antelope, for they never bat their eyes when looking at a light, while other animals will.

There are also ways in which to hunt deer and antelopes with dogs, but it does not seem advisable to either describe or use them, as they drive the game out of the country. The deer and antelope are trapped and hunted alike, as there is but little difference in their nature.

HOW TO HUNT THE WILD TURKEY.

COMMENCE training your dog when he is young by setting him on fowls of any kind : shoot them for him, giving him their heads and letting him drink their blood. Take him turkey-hunting with you and when you see fresh tracks call your dog's attention to them. He will soon learn to trail the turkey, flushing the fowls in trees for you and standing and barking at them until you come up. Their nature is such that when flushed they fly up in the timber, and if the dog stays and barks at them they will remain in the branches watching the dog, paying no attention to anything else and thus giving you all the chance you need to get close enough to shoot.

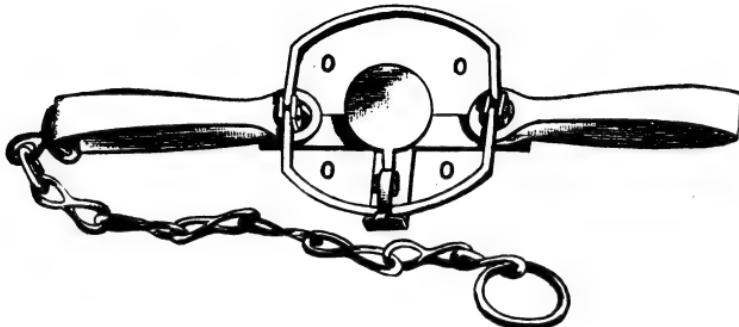
In the spring of the year, when the turkeys are gobbling and laying their eggs, they can be tolled by imitating the call of the turkey-hen. This can be done on a green leaf or with a quill. In hunting turkeys at that time, go before dawn to where you have seen fresh signs and listen for the gobble of the turkey. On hearing this go on until you are within shooting distance of him and then wait quietly until it is light enough to shoot him out of his tree. Then listen for another and, on hearing him, slip within one or two hundred yards of him and seat yourself against a tree that is larger than your body, with the turkey fronting you. Place your gun between your knees making a rest of them. Then open negotiations with the turkey by making three or four calls on your yelper; if he answers you yelp again; then wait and listen to see whether he is coming or not; if he seems to get closer call him again. When he gets within a hundred yards of you quit calling; watch every

move he makes and keep your gun on him until he gets close enough to shoot. The greatest care must be used, for if you make the slightest move while he is looking at you he will run or fly off.

ABOUT TRAPS.

FOR regular trapping, the steel trap is undoubtedly the best, and largely so because of the ease with which it can be moved from place to place.

In the preface I spoke of the Newhouse trap, which for many years took the lead. I will now try to explain some of its defects.



NEWHOUSE TRAP.

First. There are four different places where the game can step into the Newhouse

trap and out again without throwing it. These are shown by the letter "o" in the illustration.

Second. The trap is intended to catch by the foot only, but it can be thrown by either the foot or the body and still not catch the game. Many a day have I labored hard setting two or three dozen Newhouse traps, using my best skill and judgment, with the knowledge that I would get a chance at ten or fifteen animals that night. On going to my traps the next morning I have found fifteen of twenty thrown, some of them holding a toe-nail, some a little fur pulled from the animal's body, and the rest with not more than two or three animals in all of them.

There are two ways, for instance, in which an animal can step on the treadle of the trap and throw it without being caught. One is when it steps with the foot partly on the lever and partly on the treadle, pressing the latter down and throwing the trap. The lever being

forced up by the jaws, lifts the animal's foot above the jaws and clear of them, or so nearly so that they only catch it by the toes which it readily pulls off and is free once more.

Again, when the animal steps with its heel on the treadle and its toes projecting over the jaws of the trap, and thus causes the trap to fall, the jaws throw the foot out and the game escapes.

So, also, a short-legged animal like the beaver and otter, after missing the treadle with its forefeet, will drag its body over the trap and thus throw it, pinching a little fur from its body, and getting a scare that it will not get over for a week, perhaps, but otherwise escaping unhurt.

Third. In catching by the foot only, the Newhouse trap gives the animal, even after it is caught, every opportunity to break away or mutilate its fur in its struggles to escape.

And fourth. The treadles of the Newhouse traps are so small that the chances of

an animal throwing them so that they can catch are never great at any time. The treadle of No. 1 is a circle only one inch in diameter, while those of Nos. 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 have a diameter respectively of but one and three-quarter inches, two and one-quarter inches, two and one-half inches, three



A.—MINK OR RAT TRAP.

inches, and three and one-half inches.

It is evident from this that there are many difficulties to contend with in using the Newhouse trap, and that it is not a reliable instrument.

I will now explain my body traps and point out some of their advantages.

A is the mink or rat trap. It has fourteen

inches spread of jaws, and is eight and a half inches long when thrown. The treadle of this trap is seven inches in length and one inch wide. The mink or rat stands with its feet from three to four inches apart, and thus there are from nine to thirteen inches in which to catch the animal, allowing it to throw the trap with its feet or body. The treadle is placed one-half inch on one side of the trap. If the animal passes over the trap from the side opposite to the treadle it will be caught just behind the shoulders. If it comes from the side on which the treadle is, it will be caught just in front of the shoulders. This trap corresponds to No. 1½ of the Newhouse traps.

B is the coon trap, and is adapted to catching that animal, opossums, skunk, and others of like size. This trap has eighteen inches spread of jaws, and is ten and a half inches long when thrown. It has a treadle nine inches long and one inch wide. The coon and

opossum stand with the feet four inches apart, so that there are thirteen to seventeen inches



B.—COON TRAP.

in which to capture the game. This trap can be used in catching animals of less size and corresponds to No. 2 of the Newhouse traps.



C.—BEAVER OR OTTER TRAP.

C is the beaver or otter trap. It has twenty-four inches spread of jaws and is fourteen inches long when thrown. The treadle is twelve inches in length and one inch wide. The beaver and otter stand with the feet six inches apart, so that there are eighteen to twenty-three inches in which to catch them. This trap is adapted to use for beaver, otter, fox, cats, and other animals not over twelve inches high, and corresponds to Nos. 3 and 4 of the Newhouse traps.



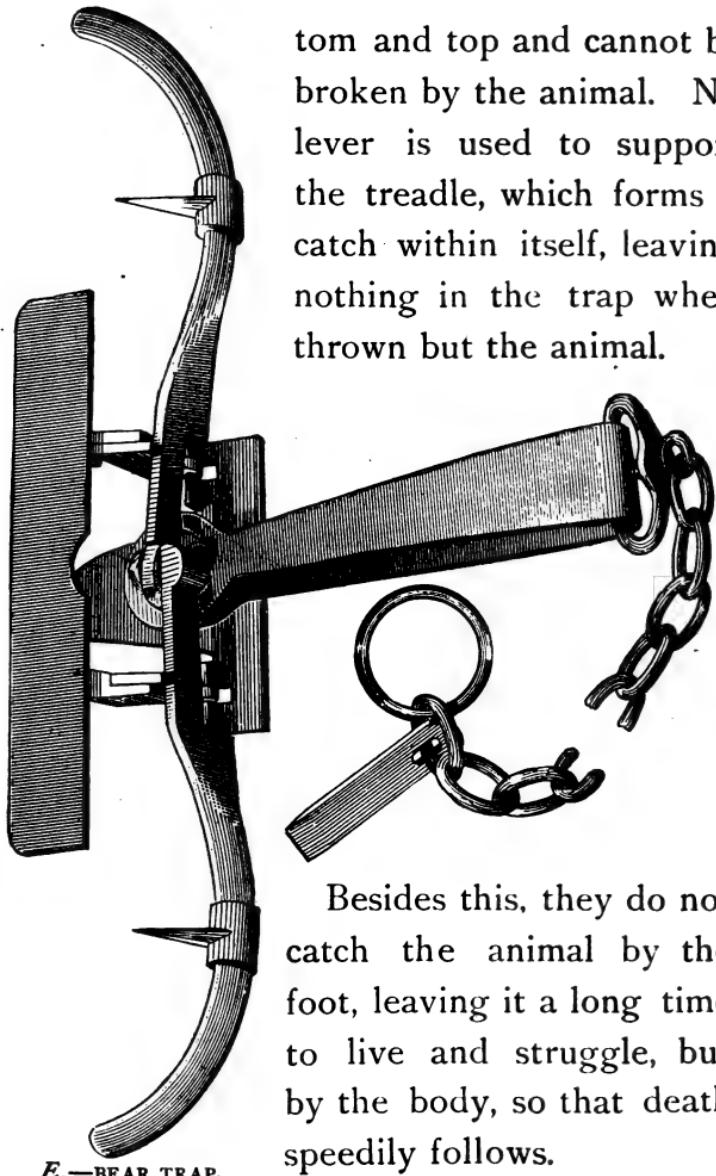
D.—ALLIGATOR OR WOLF TRAP.

D is the alligator or wolf trap. It has forty-eight inches spread of jaws, and is twenty-nine inches long when thrown. The treadle is twenty-four inches long and one and one-half inches wide. Alligators and large wolves stand with their feet one foot apart, so that there are forty-eight inches in which to capture them. The trap is adapted to catch besides the wolf and alligator other animals not over twenty-four inches high.

E is the bear or deer trap. It has six feet spread of jaws, and is three and one-third feet long when thrown. The treadle is thirty-six inches long and two inches wide. The bear and deer stand with the feet from ten to fifteen inches apart, so that there are from forty-six to fifty-one inches in which to catch them. This trap can be used safely for all animals not over three feet high, and corresponds to Nos. 5 and 6 of the Newhouse traps.

These traps brace themselves at both bot-

tom and top and cannot be broken by the animal. No lever is used to support the treadle, which forms a catch within itself, leaving nothing in the trap when thrown but the animal.



E.—BEAR TRAP.

Besides this, they do not catch the animal by the foot, leaving it a long time to live and struggle, but by the body, so that death speedily follows.

Then, too, neither the trap itself injures the fur nor gives the animal an opportunity to do so.

To sum up, these traps are superior to the Newhouse :

First, in that the treadles are very much larger and enormously increase the "catching space," and hence the chances of capturing the game.

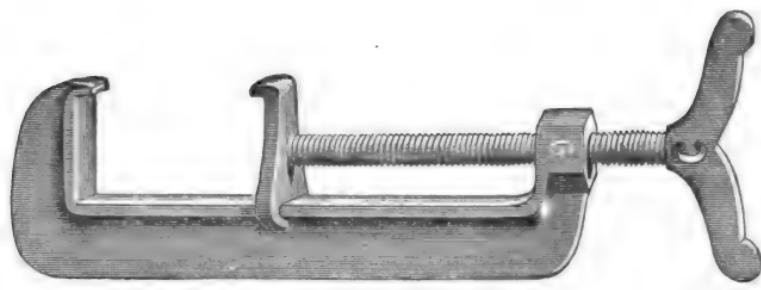
Second, there is no lever to be forced up by the jaws with the result of throwing the game out of the trap.

Third, they catch by the body and hold the game fast.

Fourth, they do not injure or permit injury to the fur.

Fifth, comparing sizes, they are lighter than the Newhouse traps.

THE ALEXANDER TRAP CLAMP AND MOVABLE TEETH.



ALEXANDER TRAP CLAMP.

By using this clamp, a man or boy can set with ease the largest sizes of the body traps. In order to do this, turn the trap bottom upward, and place the clamp on the spring as near as possible to the jaws; then turn the clamp down until it brings the ends of the spring together and place the treadle in its proper position, holding it there until you have released the clamp.

The *A*, *B*, and *C* traps can be easily set in

the following manner without using the clamp: The trap being on the ground, and right side up, place one foot on the spring near the jaws, and take hold of the latter with both hands; throw all your weight on the spring, and at the same time increase your pressure on it by pulling upon the jaws. On making the ends of the spring meet, throw the jaws open and set the trap.

Two movable teeth are furnished with each trap, and may be used or not at the discretion of the trapper. These are placed on the jaws of the trap and pierce the animal through and through, causing death very quickly. They do no injury to the skin beyond making a small hole, as, being movable, they follow the motion of the animal in its struggles, and consequently do not tear the skin. They are not a necessary part of the trap, which will hold the game whether the teeth are used or not, but are furnished for the benefit of those who wish to make "assurance doubly sure."

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3. They do not injure the fur, nor permit the animal to do so in its struggles to escape.
4. They are lighter for corresponding sizes than any other traps in use, and are

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- "A"—(14 inches spread of jaws), for Mink or Muskrat, and other animals of like size.
"B"—(18 inches spread of jaws), for Coon or Opossum, and other animals of like size.
"C"—(24 inches spread of jaws), for Beaver, Otter, or Fox, and other animals of like size.
"D"—(48 inches spread of jaws), for Alligator or Wolf, and other animals of like size.
"E"—(72 inches spread of jaws), for Deer or Bear, and other animals of like size.

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In order to use the teeth, first set the trap, and, holding it with one hand, place the teeth over the jaws with the other, allowing them to rest on the jaws a short distance from the ends of the treadle.

The reader has already been cautioned against springing the trap while the teeth are on the jaws.

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